



State Representative Gary VanDeaver



87th Legislature
Bowie | Franklin | Lamar | Red River

HD 1

87th Legislature Report - House District 1 Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties

August 2021

Around the District. New Boston Pioneer Days Festival - 50th Anniversary. This month marked the 50th anniversary of the *New Boston Pioneer Days Festival*, which was headlined by John Schneider, aka "Bo Duke" of the "Dukes of Hazzard." Schneider capped off this year's extensive music lineup as a lead country singer and drew large crowds. In previous years, Representative VanDeaver and his



The VanDeaver family at a previous Pioneer Days Festival.

family attended the festival but were unable to do so this year due to the current special session at the Capitol in Austin.

Paris Regional Medical Center receives designation from state. Earlier this month, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) announced that Paris Regional Medical Center was designated as a Level I - Maternal Specialty Care Facility. This designation, which is for two years, formally recognizes the hospital's capabilities and dedication of caring for maternal patients. A big "thank you" and congratulations to the doctors, nurses and staff at PRMC for helping take care of patients today who are tomorrow's future!

2020 Census shows challenges for rural Texas. The US Census Bureau recently released the 2020

census data that will be used by state lawmakers to redraw the state's legislative districts. Population changes in HD 1's four counties are outlined below:

County	Population - 2010	Population - 2020	% change
Bowie	92,565	92,893	0.40%
Franklin	10,605	10,359	-2.30%
Lamar	49,793	50,088	0.01%
Red River	12,860	11,587	-9.90%

Though the population in HD 1 held fairly steady over the last 10 years, the state's overall population grew almost 16 percent from 25 million to over 29 million. This change causes the four counties in HD 1 to make up a significantly smaller portion of the state's population and will be a factor during the upcoming redistricting special session.

Constituents speak out against Marvin Nichols.

Earlier this month, Region D of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) held a meeting where many area residents testified against the construction of the Lake Marvin Nichols Reservoir (MNR) in response to Region C's (D-FW Area) water

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plans that accelerated the permitting of the reservoir to 2050. The TWDB adopted its 2022 state water plan earlier this summer, and it includes MNR as a water management strategy for Region C.

The narrative painted by speakers was that Region C is attempting to "steamroll" or hold Region D "hostage." Among the many speakers were local public figures, school teachers, engineers and others potentially affected by the project. Among the commonly cited negative effects of MNR were the loss of homes, cemeteries, schools, churches, family land, jobs and more.

While Region C now feels the need for Marvin Nichols is imminent and necessary, the meeting's speakers felt that Region C has made little effort to conserve the water they do have, could get the water from other existing reservoirs such as Lake Wright Patman, should find water in their own backyard or use their existing reservoirs such as Lake Texoma for water storage rather than flood control.

The TWDB and its 16 regions operate on a five-year planning cycle so with its adoption of the most recent state plan, the planning cycle begins again at the regional level. Here is a link to the TWDB's regional planning group information including process and contacts:
<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/rwp/regions/index.asp>.

Around the Capitol. Capitol Flooding. A huge thunderstorm hit downtown Austin on Sunday, August 15, which caused not only flooding throughout the city but also at the Texas Capitol. Videos and social media posts showed an eerie scene where it appeared to be raining inside the underground Capitol Extension, which resulted in several inches of water flowing throughout the Capitol's ground floor.



The flooding occurred due to a clogged storm drain that backed up water for the first time in the extension's almost 30-year

history. The State Preservation Board began the cleanup that night to dry out the offices and hallways as soon as possible since the legislature is still in special session.



Fortunately, the affected offices were able to be used the next day though often with dryers and

fans blowing.

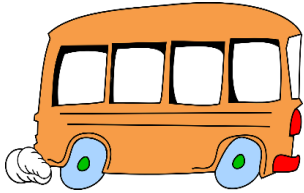
Special sessions continue. The legislature is currently in the middle of the second-called special session since the regular session adjourned the end of May. Much has been said about the walkout by certain members to break quorum to prevent the passage of several key issues that failed to pass earlier this year. As of today, a quorum is again present in the House of Representatives that is working hard to enact issues such as election integrity, 13th-month check for retired educators, extra funding to support efforts to secure our southern border, bail reform and virtual instruction. The current special session ends at midnight on September 5, 2021.

Back to school time means it's time to "drive smart." The end of summer means millions of Texas children returning to school. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) reminds drivers to be extra cautious as school zones become

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more active, as well as to be aware of [school bus safety](#). Despite much lower traffic levels around Texas schools due to the pandemic, there were still 400 vehicle crashes in school zones in 2020, resulting in 11 serious injuries. The most common causes of these crashes were entirely preventable: 1) failure to control speed, 2) driver inattention and 3) failure to yield the right-of-way at a stop sign or private drive.

Following these simple tips can help Texas children reach school safely and help drivers avoid costly fines and tickets. We urge drivers to slow down, pay attention and follow traffic laws in school zones. Parents and children walking to school should be alert at all times, and only cross the street at intersections and designated crosswalks.



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Tips for Driving in School Zones:

- Be aware that traffic patterns around school zones may have changed since the last school year.
- Stay alert and put your cell phone away. Using a handheld electronic device while driving in an active school zone is against the law.
- Always obey school zone speed limit signs. Remember, traffic fines increase in school zones.
- Drop off and pick up your children in your school's designated areas, not the middle of the street.
- Keep an eye on children gathered at bus stops.
- Watch for children who might dart across the street or between vehicles.
- As always, stay away from alcohol and other drugs that may impair driving. They affect your ability to remain alert, decision-making, reflexes, and reaction time.

Tips for Children Walking or Biking to School:

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- Always use sidewalks. If there's not a sidewalk, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic.
- Cross the street at intersections or marked crosswalks. Look left, right and left again before proceeding.
- Always obey crossing guards.
- Make eye contact with drivers before crossing the street. Never assume a driver sees you.
- Look for traffic when stepping off a bus or from behind parked cars.
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.
- Don't be distracted by electronic devices that take your eyes and ears off the road.
- Follow all traffic rules, signs and signals.

Please do your part. Working together, we can all help keep our children safe!

Social Media. Please follow me on both my Facebook and Twitter accounts!

My office is here to help. I thank each of you for letting me serve you as your state representative. Please contact either the District office (903-628-0361) or Capitol office (512-463-0692) if there is anything you think we can do to help you.